

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

SUBJECT Notes on Kovo, Ltd.

CONFIDENTIAL

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1. Kovo, Ltd. (Prague, Vaclavski nam. 6) commenced its activities on 1 November 1948. The Director General is Ing. Vlad. Kratky, former Vice Director General of the Metallurgical and Machine Enterprises (Cz. Zavody Kovodelne a Strojirenske). Kratky is a career politician, like the director of the Second Section, Ing. Kondr. Political conditions in the Second Section were, a short time ago, the best in all Kovo.

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2. The former Director of Cadres, Horský, a Skoda employee, was soon dismissed. He was replaced by the senior clerk Strnad

3. Of the 150 officials in the Second Section, 75 percent are members of the Communist Party or are candidates for membership. The others are without political affiliation. Of the 75 percent, hardly ten percent are convinced Communists. The others have signed up from fear.

4. Attendance at the RCH (trade union) meetings is low and frequent excuses are made, despite many reprimands. Only twenty-five persons from the enterprise attended the "Assembly for Peace" held as a counterpart of the Paris Congress for Peace. The others stayed away despite threats.

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5. The machine tools exported by Kovo (from Skoda, Zbrojovka, and Plauert) have a world-wide fame. As regards their construction, they are among the best, but the material is defective. The steel used for gear wheels is of poor quality and these wheels break frequently. There are many complaints about the electrical equipment.

The good name of this firm was damaged by the negligence that occurred in the assembly and the packing. It often happens at Skoda during the packing of automatic machines that instruments and spare parts different from those ordered are packed with the machinery.

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-2-

6. The factories are failing to fulfill the Plan as far as the large machines are concerned. On the other hand, the warehouses are full of light machinery, especially lathes, which it is almost impossible to sell.

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